

Proposals considered by the Board on 26 July 2022 for:  
Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek [approved as official]  
Kea Crags or Kea Crag [altered from Stewart Crags]



## Summary

The proposals from a retired surveyor, are to approve three recorded<sup>1</sup> (unofficial) place names: Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek as official, and to alter Stewart Crags to either Kea Crags or Kea Crag.

The crags (cliffs) and knob (hill) are approximately 9km north of Haast Pass/Tioripatea, and the falls and creek are approximately 3km to the south of the pass.

The proposer has provided evidence that the features were named for William Guthrie Stewart (1841-1901), who was a highly regarded early runholder in the area.

Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek have been in long term use on official maps. No alternative recorded names are known for the features, and

<sup>1</sup> A recorded place name is one that has appeared on at least two authoritative maps, charts or databases, which the NZGB has resolved to be: NZMS maps, LINZ Archived Place Names Database, [Kā Huru Manu](#), and all hydrographic and bathymetric maps and charts published under a New Zealand hydrographic authority at the time of publication.

it is unlikely that the public would object to them being approved as official under the fast-track process. Officially naming the features would meet the Board's objective to make place names official.

Since c.1886 the cliffs, which rise from Haast River to spot height 1139m at the southwest end of Bealey Range, have been consistently named on plans and maps as either Stewart's Crag or Stewart Crag.

As an option the proposer has suggested that Kea Crag be assigned as the name of the trigonometrical station (trig) at the highest point of the cliffs [1139m], but still alter Stewart Crag to Kea Crag. Under the NZGB Act 2008 the Board does not have jurisdiction to name trigs, but it can approve Kea Crag as the official name of the high point of the clifftop.

Altering Stewart Crag to either Kea Crag or Kea Crag is likely to cause confusion because of duplication if the clifftop is named Kea Crag. The proposer has not provided sufficient evidence for the Board to consider an alteration.

## Secretariat recommendations

At its 26 July 2022 hui the Board: amended and resolved recommendation 1 as shown in red below, also resolving a new recommendation to alter Stewarts Creek to Stewart Creek for consistency and consult for one month; declined recommendation 2; resolved recommendations 3 and 4.

Recommendation 1 **Approve** the existing recorded (unofficial) names **Stewart Falls**, and Stewart Knob ~~and Stewarts Creek~~ as official place names based on:

- their long term use on official maps (51 years),
- there being no other alternative recorded names known for the features, and
- public objection being unlikely.

**Subject** to Te Rūnunga o Ngāi Tahu confirming there are no original Māori names for the features.

and

**Decline** the proposal to approve **Stewarts Creek** as an official place name,

and

**Accept** a new proposal from the Board to **alter** Stewarts Creek to **Stewart Creek**, based on consistency with the other Stewart names,

and

**Notify** as a proposal to alter for one month.

**and**

Recommendation 2 ~~**Approve** the existing recorded (unofficial) name **Kea Crag** as the official place name for the high point of the clifftop at spot height 1139m based on:~~

- ~~— that being the position of the trig named Kea Crag no. 2 on official maps,~~
- ~~— there being no other alternative recorded name known for the feature,~~

~~and~~

---

~~— public objection being unlikely.~~

~~**Subject** to Te Rūnunga o Ngāi Tahu confirming there are no original Māori names for the feature.~~

---

**and**

- Recommendation 3 **Decline** the proposal to **alter** the recorded (unofficial) name Stewart Craggs to either Kea Craggs or Kea Crag as an official place name, based on:
- Stewart Craggs being in long term use (73 years) for the feature on official maps,
  - Kea Crag being a recorded name for the high point of the clifftop (previously the trig) at spot height 1139m immediately above Stewart Craggs, and
  - the proposer not having provided sufficient evidence to support the proposal.
- 

**and**

- Recommendation 4 **Accept** a new proposal from the Board to **approve Stewart Craggs** as the official place name of the steep cliffs rising from Haast River to spot height 1139m at the southwest end of Bealey Range based on the name being in long term use (73 years) on official maps at this location,
- and**
- Notify** as a proposal to approve for one month.
- 

## Secretariat assessment and advice

The proposals

### **Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek**

The proposer, who is a retired surveyor, is seeking to have the recorded (unofficial) place names Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek approved as official.

Based on information provided from the Board's archives, the proposer advises that the features were named for William Guthrie Stewart (1841-1901). Stewart purchased the Makarora Run in the late 1870s or early 1880s and moved stock around the Haast valley. Stewart's obituary records that he was held in high esteem throughout Central Otago.

### **Stewart Craggs altered to either Kea Craggs or Kea Crag**

The proposer is also seeking to have Stewart Craggs altered to either Kea Craggs or Kea Crag. The proposer advises that a 1954 sketch map he used on a bike trip through the area named the feature Kea Crag. During a road survey in 1963-64 the proposer climbed the craggs twice.

In support of this proposal, the proposer has provided extracts from:

- [\*Building a highway the hard way\*](#)<sup>2</sup> in which a road construction worker states that their camp was below Kea Crag,
- *The Friendly Road* by AH Reed, which records that Reed stayed overnight with the road survey team in 1964 and refers to the 3899' [1189m] almost perpendicular, Kea Crag, near the headwaters of the river.

The proposer has suggested as an option that Kea Crag be retained as the

---

<sup>2</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 27 April 2019. Accessed 3 June 2022.

name of the trig at the highest point of the cliffs [1139m], and that the rugged cliff faces, Stewart Crag, be altered to Kea Crag.

Names shown on maps and plans

Stewart's Creek with an apostrophe is recorded on the 1928 NZMS 13. The apostrophe is subsequently dropped and the [s] retained on official maps<sup>3</sup>. It is not proposed to remove the possessive [s] due to long term use.

Stewart Falls is first named on an official map in 1971.

Stewart Knob is recorded as Stewart's Knob on an 1880s survey plan<sup>4</sup> and thereafter as Stewart Knob on official maps.

From c.1886 onwards the cliffs are consistently named on plans and maps as either Stewart's Crag or Stewart Crag.

Although not named on the NZTopo50-BZ13 map, Kea Crag is the recorded name for the high point of the cliff top at 1139m above Stewart Crag. That is the position of the order 8 trig named Kea Crag no. 2 shown on the 1971 NZMS 1 and the 1989 NZMS 260. It would have been established because the original order 12 trig named Kea Crag couldn't be found in the undergrowth.

Map/plan	Date	Name
SO 8750	~1886	Stewart's Crag, Stewart's Knob
NZMS 13, OT2	1928	Stewart's Creek
NZMS 15	1949	Stewart's Crag, Stewart Knob, Kea Crag (trig) at 1189m
NZMS 177, S98	1963	Stewart's Creek, Stewart Crag, Stewart Knob, Kea Crag (trig) at 1189m
NZMS 1, S98	1971	Stewart's Creek, Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob, Stewart Crag, trigs Kea Crag at 1189m and Kea Crag no. 2 at 1139m
NZMS 273	1976	Kea Crag (trig) at 1189m, Stewart Knob, Stewart's Ck
NZMS 260, G38	1989	Stewart's Creek, Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob, Stewart Crag, Kea Crag no. 2 (trig) at 1139m
NZTopo50-BZ13	2016	Stewart Crag, Stewart Falls, Stewart's Creek
NZTopo50-BY13	2019	Stewart Knob

Location, [geographic feature types](#) and generic terms

The features are adjacent to Haast Highway (SH6) which runs between Haast and Queenstown.

Stewart Knob and Stewart Crag are on the east side of the Gates of Haast bridge, approximately 9km north of Haast Pass/Tioripatea. Stewart Knob is the hill at 1367m near the southwest end of Bealey Range. Stewart Crag, which are approximately 1.7km southwest of Stewart Knob, are steep cliffs rising from Haast River to spot height 1139m.

Stewart's Creek flows northwest for ~5.5km from Young Range into Makarora River at Davis Flat. Stewart Falls are on Stewart's Creek near its confluence with Makarora River, approximately 3km south of Haast Pass/Tioripatea.

<sup>3</sup> Historically there was concern that map users might misinterpret the possessive apostrophe as a symbol of underlying topographic feature. Therefore, it would have been removed from later editions of maps.

<sup>4</sup> The Board does not consider survey plans to be authoritative documents.

The generic terms [creek](#), [falls](#), [crag](#)s and [knob](#) appropriately describe the features.

---

[New Zealand Gazetteer](#), associated names and duplication

[Stewart Falls](#), [Stewart Knob](#), [Stewarts Creek](#) and [Stewart Crag](#)s are unofficial recorded names in the Gazetteer. There are no other Stewart place names nearby. The nearest, Stewart Pass approximately 28km to the west, was named for a Dr Lindsay Stewart c.1947.

There are no exact duplications of Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob or Stewart Crag

s. Stewarts Creek is duplicated in the recorded place names [Stewarts Creek](#) near Dunedin, [Stewarts Creek](#) north of Queenstown, [Stewart Creek](#) north of Kaikōura and [Stewart Creek](#) southeast of Otira. These creeks are too far distant from this proposal to cause confusion.

[Kea Crag](#) was recently added by the Secretariat as the recorded name in the Gazetteer for the high point on the clifftop at 1139m above Stewart Crag

s. Nineteen other features on the western side of Te Waipounamu are named Kea. None have the same generic term, so they are unlikely to be confused.

Research, history and references to the features

None of the names are recorded in the indices of the [Canterbury Mountaineer](#) (1932-2007) or the [New Zealand Alpine Journal](#) (1892-2016).

A *Wilderness* magazine article describes 'the fearsome Stewart Crag

s' as an almost 1000m wall of forest and cliff rising sheer from Wills River (sic) to the crest of Bealey Range<sup>5</sup>. See this [image](#).

A 1936 article in the *Otago Daily Times* records that Kea Crag at 3899' [1189m] and Stewart Knob at 4490' [1367m] look like mountains.<sup>6</sup>

The *Otago Daily Times* records in 1938 that Kea Crag, near Stewart Knob, 'is well-named for the numerous inquisitive kea alighted on nearby rocks'.<sup>7</sup>

---

Consultation with iwi

There are no original Māori names recorded for the features in [Kā Huru Manu](#), and to date TRONT has not advised if any original Māori names are known.

---

Advice on orthography<sup>8</sup>

A Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori licensed translator has advised that 'Kea' is the correct orthography.

---

Relevant section from the [NZGB Act 2008](#)

Section 24 of the Act allows for a recorded place name to be approved as official if no other alternative recorded name is known for a feature and public objection is unlikely.

*There are no known alternative names for Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob and Stewarts Creek, which have been in long term use. It is unlikely that the public would object to them being assigned as official.*

---

<sup>5</sup> Wilderness, September 2017. [11 trips on the Bealey Range](#). Accessed 3 June 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Otago Daily Times, 24 February 1936. [Through Bush and River to the West Coast](#). Accessed 7 June 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Otago Daily Times, 2 April 1938. [Meanderings in our Mountains](#). Accessed 7 June 2022.

<sup>8</sup> The conventions and rules of how to write a language

[Standard for New Zealand place names](#) criteria

### 1.1(b) Acceptable names

The surname or traditional ancestral Māori name of a person who has been deceased for at least two years, was a notable leader, of good character, and/or contributed to, or had a strong association with the feature, place or area.

*Stewart's obituary records that he was a generous upright character of sound judgement who was highly esteemed throughout Central Otago.<sup>9</sup>*

### 1.3(c) Undesirable names and other considerations

A name that already exists in a neighbouring area or is already in use throughout New Zealand should be avoided except where the story/kōrero explains the unique heritage and meaning(s) of the name. This avoids confusion and makes it easier to identify the correct place in an emergency.

*While duplication exists, these Stewart names and Kea Crag have already been in long term use and not caused any issues.*

### 1.6 Altered names

Any alteration should balance the cultural and historical significance of the name against long-term use and the practical need for location identification. *Kea Crag is the recorded name for the high point of the clifftop at 1139m above Stewart Crag, and Stewart Crag has been in long term use on plans and maps (~136 years). Therefore, altering Stewart Crag to either Kea Crag or Kea Crag could cause confusion because of duplication.*

### 1.5(d) Orthographic standards

The English possessive form should not be used. However, existing names with the possessive [s] that do not have the possessive apostrophe, have been in long-term use and have low public value will not be altered.

*Stewarts Creek has been in long term use (94 years), so it shouldn't be altered.*

---

Concerns or issues for emergency services

The features are within Mount Aspiring National Park, which is a significant recreational area.

---

## Supporting information

1. Proposals for Stewart Falls, Stewart Knob, Stewarts Creek, Kea Crag or Kea Crag – 2022-05-04
2. Email from TRONT – consultation feedback – 2022-07-06

---

<sup>9</sup> Otago Witness, 23 October 1901. [Obituary](#). Accessed 7 June 2022.